

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

April 3, 2002

LR 6

question to all of you is what kind of message are we sending to our young people of this state. We are saying that you don't have to work hard. You don't have to try to improve yourself. All you have to do is just take your roll at the dice and see what comes up and you might win a jackpot. You might win a lot of money. And I think that is the wrong message to be sending not only to our youth but also as a state--the statement, the value statement that we are saying and projecting. Also we're talking about revenue. It said that the casinos in Council Bluffs in 1997, people lost \$264 million. We talk about these buses rolling into the casinos and I just ask all of you, how many of these people are very well-to-do people? Most of them are living from month to month on salaries. Most of these are low-income people and yet they're spending the very limited income that they have in these types of facilities. Also we're talking about, oh, yes, maybe the casinos will bring in some revenues. It says most methods of state taxation cost about one to two cents to bring in each dollar of revenue. However, gambling, you can expect that it will be costing 60 to 75 cents. And so that would leave approximately 25 to 40 cents. So I think that we are not looking at the entire picture. I think that we are also looking at problems that are compounded by the expansion of gambling. Statistics prove that it does destroy marriages. It undermines the work ethic, again, that we have a very strong work ethic in this state. It does increase crime, suicide, destroys the financial security of families. These are only some of the reasons that I believe that research does point out. But, again, I think it sends a very negative message. We talk about economic development to the reservations...

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: One minute.

SENATOR STUHR: ...and yet most of the studies prove that jobs have not increased, that the job employment rate stays about the same, particularly on the reservations. Also, talking about we know we have one state in the United States, Nevada, that is known for its gambling. It's also number one in gambling addiction; number one in suicide; number one in divorce; number one in high school dropouts; number three in bankruptcies; and number five in overall crime. And I'm just wondering if that's what we want our state to be. Thank you.